

Agency Operations Plan 2015-17

Agency:

North Dakota Public Employees Retirement System (NDPERS)
--

Line of Business: (optional)

The Public Employees Retirement System is the administrator of several employee benefit plans for state employees and employees of participating political subdivisions. A brief description of each plan follows:

Defined Benefit Pension Plans: The Public Employees Retirement System covers substantially all employees of the State of North Dakota, its agencies, and various political subdivisions. It also covers Supreme and District Court Judges, the National Guard Security Officers and Firefighters, and participating Law Enforcement entities.

Defined Contribution Pension Plan: The defined contribution pension plan is an option available to non-classified state employees.

Retiree Health Insurance Credit Program: This program is designed to provide eligible retirees with a benefit that can be used to offset the cost of their health insurance premiums during their retirement.

Group Health Insurance Plan: This program provides health insurance coverage to active and retired public employees and their families. The plan covers substantially all employees of the State of North Dakota, its agencies, and various participating political subdivisions.

Group Life Insurance Plan: This program provides basic life insurance to active and retired employees. Active employees have the option of purchasing additional life insurance under the employee supplemental, dependent supplemental, and spouse supplemental provisions of the plan. The plan covers substantially all employees of the State of North Dakota, its agencies, and various participating political subdivisions.

Voluntary Insurance Products: The agency is authorized to offer voluntary dental, vision and long term care insurance. Currently, these plans are offered to state employees.

Employee Assistance Program: This program is designed to provide special assistance in guidance and counseling and to determine appropriate diagnosis and/or course of treatment to state employees and their eligible dependents in cases of alcoholism, drug abuse and personal problems.

Deferred Compensation Program: This is a voluntary, supplemental retirement plan provided in accordance with Section 457 of the Internal Revenue Code. It allows state employees, and employees of participating political subdivisions, to defer and invest income on a pretax basis to be withdrawn at a later date, usually at retirement.

Pretax Benefits Program (FlexComp): This program allows eligible state employees to elect to reduce their salaries to pay for qualified insurance premiums, medical expenses and dependent care expenses on a pre-tax basis.

Contact:

Name:	Ron Gilliam	
Title:	IT Supervisor	
Phone #:	701-328-3916	
Email:	rgilliam@nd.gov	

Technology Strategy:**Agency Mission Statement:**

"Design, communicate and efficiently administer a viable employee benefits program within a framework of prudent risk taking, applicable state and federal laws, and professional and ethical standards so as to provide an employee benefit package that is among the best available from public and private employers in the upper Midwest."

The agency employs the use of technology to accomplish this mission through various channels such as the internet, email, and print media. NDPERS maintains a web site where members and employers can receive accurate and timely plan information. In addition, members can view their account balance and annual statements via the PERSLink Member Self Service Portal. Employers access their information and submit payroll data via the PERSLink Employer Self Service Portal. In late summer of 2012, NDPERS will deploy a full service Member Self Service Portal which will include the ability for the member to enroll in various plans and/or update their plan participation information. Communication to active members and retirees is also accomplished by the publication of periodic newsletters. A newsletter with employer-specific information is sent to participating employers.

NDPERS' effort to keep abreast of technology includes the participation in the State's 4 year computer replacement strategy along with software replacement in compliance with Enterprise Architecture Standards. In addition, the IT Staff participates on various Enterprise Architecture teams and attends the IT Coordinator meetings held by ITD.

Technology Infrastructure:

- Servers

NDPERS hosts two file & print servers. Both are physical machines running Windows Server. The agency also utilizes 8 virtual servers hosted by ITD for the line of business system. ITD hosts and additional 3 virtual servers in the Mandan Data Center that are replicated for use in our disaster recovery plan. All of the virtual servers are running Windows Server operating system. File and print servers are on the 4 year replacement cycle.

- Desktops

- Operating systems –34 desktop computers running Windows 8
- Management tools/techniques – Windows Server Management Tools
- Replacement schedules – 4 years

- Laptops

- Operating systems – 4 Laptops running Windows 8
- Management tools/techniques – Manual management
- Replacement schedules – 4 years
- Security and Encryption tools/strategies (if applicable) – Currently no encryption is used on the laptops. User-id and password are required.

- Mobile Devices (tablets, smartphones, etc.)

- Describe your mobile device strategy –The agency supplies a tablet computer (iPad) which is being used by the Executive Director. The Director supplies his personal iPhone and utilizes the State of ND's data plan.
- Operating systems – iPad Apple OSX; iPhone, iOS7
- Management tools/techniques – AppleCare for the iPod
- Replacement schedules – as needed
- Security and Encryption tools/strategies (if applicable) – User-id and password required

- Client Applications (desktop, laptop, mobile devices)

- Name and/or type of application

Desktop – Timesheet application developed in Microsoft Excel/VBA

Deferred Comp Xmits application for transmitting deferred comp contribution files to various vendors; developed in Microsoft Access/VBA

Desktop - HIPAA File Transmission & TIAA/CREF File Transmission – these applications check files created by PERSLink that are intended for group insurance carriers and the current deferred compensation Companion Plan provider to determine if there are records with missing data. The application has been developed in Visual Basic.

Web Client - PERSLink – this application is the agency's line of business system. Among its many attributes, PERSLink provides a system for NDPERS staff to perform enrollment functions; update plan status/membership status; collect and account for retirement contributions, insurance premiums and deferred compensation contributions; and provides the mechanism for delivering superior customer service to the NDPERS membership. The application has been developed in Microsoft Visual C# on the .NET platform. Maintenance is currently being performed by Sagitec Solutions, LLC.

No applications have been developed specifically for the laptop or mobile device platforms.

- Data

- Backup tools/strategies – Internal Data (spreadsheets, documents, etc) – NDPERS utilizes the IBM Tivoli Storage Manager client application to facilitate nightly backup of data stored on the agency's two file/print servers.
PERSLink Data - is stored on ITD's SQL Server 2008 cluster. Backup is currently on ITD's backup schedule. NDPERS has established an offsite data and application repository at ITD's Mandan Data Center for use in the event of a disaster. Data is replicated to the offsite location every 15 minutes during business hours and hourly after business hours.
- Security and Encryption tools/strategies (if applicable) – Active Directory user-id and password are required in order for internal users to access the data. External users (employers & members) are required to have a ND Login ID and password in order to access PERSLink data. External users are required to furnish additional employer-specific or member-specific data as part of their initial login authentication.
- Origination or source of the data – the PERSLink data originated from legacy data converted from the mainframe database. Current data is a combination of the converted data and any new data gathered through PERSLink. Network data originates as documents, spreadsheets, publications, etc. created by NDPERS staff.
- Other agencies or entities that consume the data and how it is shared – employer agencies are able to access their agency-specific data via the PERSLink Employer Self Service Portal. The data is used by these agencies to report payroll-related information to NDPERS.
Members have the ability to enroll in various plans offered by NDPERS as well as update and view their personal and plan information via the PERSLink Member Self Service Portal.

- Reporting tools, online publication, and hardcopy publication – NDPERS uses the Microsoft Office suite of tools and Adobe Acrobat Professional for creating online and hard copy publications; many of which are available on the agency's web site.

Planned Activities:

Equipment Replacement - the agency plans to replace the file & print servers, a printer and several older model projectors.

NDPERS Website Redesign – Funding is being requested as an optional package in the 2015-17 biennium budget request to redesign the NDPERS website. The agency would like to modernize and enhance the site's look, feel and organization to ensure that our stakeholders find the information they seek and can easily conduct business with NDPERS. In addition, the redesign would provide an opportunity to build the site for easy access regardless of the user's device of choice (computer, tablet, mobile phone) and operating system.

PERSLink Refinements – Funding is being requested as an optional package in the 2015-17 biennium budget request to continue to retain additional developers to complete work on a backlog of system refinements. This activity is scheduled to begin in the Fall of 2014.

Purchase Tablet computers for NDPERS Board of Trustees

The IT Staff is continuing to train for taking over some of the PERSLink support responsibilities.

In June of each year we will conduct a disaster recovery exercise.

Technologies being considered or investigated:

Virtualization of desktop computers
Microsoft office 365